



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

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# Amtrak Buys More Cars!

## TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

San Diego-Los Angeles "San Diegans" 774, 783 will be extended northward to Santa Barbara June 25 (Sep. 1986 News). This extension will bring Amtrak service to Ventura, Chatsworth, and Van Nuys, and will double service to Santa Barbara, Oxnard, Simi Valley, and Glendale, CA. Intermediate stops between Los Angeles and San Diego are not shown below.

Train 774		Train 783
7:45 AM	SANTA BARBARA	10:10 PM
8:30 AM	Ventura	9:15 PM
9:00 AM	Oxnard	8:45 PM
9:15 AM	Simi Valley	8:30 PM
9:27 AM	Chatsworth	8:16 PM
9:45 AM	Van Nuys	8:00 PM
10:15 AM	Glendale	7:45 PM
10:45 AM	LOS ANGELES	7:30 PM
1:40 PM	LOS ANGELES	4:45 PM
	SAN DIEGO	

\*Service to commence here at a later date.

Amtrak resumed seasonal, weekend New York-Hyannis "Cape Codders" May 27. Note: Washington-New York-Hyannis rail service is also available weekdays this summer, via change of trains at Attleboro, MA. Cape Cod & Hyannis Rr. Hyannis-Attleboro trains meet Amtrak's northbound "Narragansett" Train 168, southbound "Minute Man" Train 175, through Labor Day. CC&H honors Amtrak tickets. For CC&H times: call Amtrak or CC&H (508, 617 before July 16) 771-1145, or see Amtrak Timetable Form 4 (NARP will send with SASE).

Amtrak fares increased 4% on average June 1. All Aboard America Fares rose May 27 to: \$159 for 1 zone, \$239 for 2 zones, \$299 for 3 zones.

New York-Montreal "Adirondack" dropped Port Kent and Willsboro, NY, May 15.

Lafayette, IN, Amtrak station has moved to Potpourri Gift Shop, 210 N. 5th St.—1 block north of former site at Lahr Hotel.

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Amtrak Pres. W. Graham Claytor Jr., at a June 7 National Press Club breakfast, announced an agreement under which Amtrak will purchase 50 new cars valued at just under \$1 million each from Bombardier Corp. The agreement includes an option for the future purchase of 50 more cars at the same price. Claytor and Bombardier Pres. Larry E. Salci made a joint announcement the next day.

Delivery of the 50 cars—44 coaches and 6 food service cars—is scheduled between Mar. 31 and Aug. 31, 1989. Bombardier will assemble the cars at its facility in Barre, VT. They will be similar to aluminum-clad commuter railroad cars now running in Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania but will have 84 seats each. The cars are designed to reach 125 mph, but FRA approval will be needed for this.

[On May 25, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority approved purchase of 50 Bombardier commuter rail cars for \$45 mill., increasing MBTA's active fleet to 255 "at a time when commuter rail ridership is rising rapidly"—the 1987 total of 52,372 daily passengers was 48% above 1982's 35,376. The MBTA cars will enter service between July-Dec., 1989, and will each seat 120 (3-2 seating) Funding is authorized in

(continued on page 4)

## Legislative Update

On June 9, the House Appropriations Committee reported out a Fiscal 1989 transportation spending bill containing \$590 million for Amtrak. The White House had sought \$0; Amtrak's 1988 grant is \$581 mill. The Senate Appropriations Committee should begin work on a transportation bill in late June.

On Apr. 27, the Senate Commerce Committee passed a 3-year Amtrak reauthorization, with funding ceilings of \$630, \$656, and \$681 million for Fiscal 1989-91. The House Commerce Committee has not yet acted on a reauthorization bill.

The House and Senate have passed the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 1988 and sent it to the White House for Pres. Reagan's expected signature. The bill contains many recommendations stemming from last year's Chase, MD, accident. Random drug/alcohol testing of safety-sensitive rail employees is not contained in this bill—but is contained in the Senate's Airline Consumer Protection Act, and the House's Railroad Drug Abuse Prevention Act.



## Amtrak's Many Track Problems

Amtrak seems to be devoting more and more energy to coping with freight railroad plans to downgrade and/or abandon lines. Here, we cover major problems with track in Indiana, Virginia, Illinois, Wisconsin, Vermont, and the Carolinas, plus a minor problem in Florida. If America's practice of heavily subsidizing dangerous big trucks never ends, we may soon recall these track problems as "child's play."

**Broadway Ltd./Calumet/Capitol Ltd.:** Conrail removed all freight from the 19-mile Valparaiso-Gary, IN segment. If Amtrak continues to use the line, it will have to pay all of the line's maintenance costs; alternatives are under study.

One possibility: rerouting the long-distance trains off the segment, perhaps sending both via Cleveland or one via Cleveland and the other on CSX (Hammond-Akron-Youngstown-Pittsburgh). This presumably would mean serving Ft. Wayne with feeder buses to/from Waterloo and/or Garrett, IN. Ft. Wayne would "enjoy" (albeit via feeder bus) 3 daily round-trips to/from Chicago, 2 for New York City, plus new service to Boston and upstate New York and northern Ohio.

Rerouting the long-distance trains would shift all Valparaiso-Gary track maintenance costs to the Chicago-Valparaiso commuter "Calumet," probably causing it to fail statutory criteria; it would then be discontinued absent state/local subsidies or a change in the Amtrak law.

**Cardinal:** Should CSX implement its proposed Charlottesville-Clifton Forge, VA, abandonment (Mar. News, p. 3), "Cardinal" would no longer be competitive with driving times for trips between Washington, DC, and West Virginia. Amtrak Pres. W. Graham Claytor Jr. told the NARP Board Apr. 21 that the alternative routes "are just plain not satisfactory. You can't go to Lynchburg because you'd spend an hour making a connection there, as well as another hour and a half lost on the James River Div. [Lynchburg-Clifton Forge] which is just one continuous curve."

To make a circuitous Virginia reroute more attractive to Amtrak, CSX has suggested it may be able to assist Amtrak in speeding up the train in the Cincinnati area, including returning Amtrak to Cincinnati Union Terminal, eliminating the slow backup into River Road Station. Asked about locally-circulated rumors that CSX wants to downgrade its Hamilton-Indianapolis line, Claytor said CSX has "told us that, on the contrary, they have improved that line so much that that's one of the areas in which—if we reroute this 'Cardinal'—they will be able to increase our speeds and help our schedules."

The Cincinnati speedup would only partially offset time added in Virginia and would not benefit Washington-WV travelers at all—and "Cardinal" is most fully loaded as it crosses Virginia!

**Chicago-St. Louis:** Chicago, Missouri & Western's tracks continue to deteriorate. 60 mph slow orders now cover the entire Joliet-St. Louis run, apparently costing another 50+ minutes of running time. (Though Amtrak added 25 minutes to running times in the May 15 timetable, trains were averaging 52 minutes late in late May.)

Because Amtrak might be forced off CM&W, Amtrak is studying alternate routes. The most obvious one: Illinois Central Chicago-Champaign-Tolono/Norfolk & Western Tolono-Decatur-St. Louis; the state-supported "Illini" used the Chicago-Decatur portion of this route in 1982-83. There is no obvious Springfield-St. Louis alternative, so the state-supported "Loop" and "State House" likely would run Chicago-Springfield (on N&W Decatur-Springfield or IC Gilman-Springfield). Only "Ann Rutledge" and "Eagle" would run Chicago-St. Louis, a reduction of one frequency.

The State of Illinois is hopeful that its modest financial contribution for upgrading CM&W tracks will forestall such draconian measures. Some federal funding is a possibility—money appropriated for the freight preference-share program but not wanted by the railroads for which it was designated. These funds would return to the Treasury Oct. 1 unless expended.

NARP, in a June 4 letter, urged Illinois Gov. James R. Thompson (R) to "explore with an open mind the possibility of the state acquiring and upgrading" the Chicago-St. Louis line. For some time, Illinois ARP, through news releases and contacts with public officials, has been working hard to get the state to act to save this vital route.

**Empire Builder:** Soo Line's Chicago-St. Paul tracks pose a long-term problem; the railroad's 5-year track repair program means work will get done too slowly, with perhaps a decade elapsing before tracks would permit satisfactory Amtrak operations. Amtrak may go to arbitration in hopes of compelling Soo Line to live up to its contractual responsibilities, and is investigating temporarily rerouting "Empire Builder" on the Burlington Northern's Chicago-East Dubuque-St. Paul line.

After WisARP suggested its willingness to help Soo Line secure a state loan to speed up trackwork, 2 hopeful quotations appeared in the June 5 *La Crosse Tribune*: John Evans, Administrator of WisDOT's Div. of Transp. Assistance—"We're going to do everything we can to stop [a reroute] from happening"; John Bergeme, Soo Line spokesman—"We'd be willing to accelerate the upgrading any way we can. We want to get it done too."

**Montrealer:** (See also Mar. News.) Service resumption late this year is still a longshot possibility but only if:

- the Interstate Commerce Commission meets its self-imposed Aug. 8 deadline for determining the value of the Brattleboro-Windsor line;

- Amtrak and Central Vermont are willing to pay Boston and Maine (B&M) the amount the ICC sets;

- B&M either doesn't challenge the ICC decision in court, or is promptly rebuffed in court;

- CV does enough track work before the snow flies (CV believes an early-Aug. start would allow this); and

- Amtrak brings back the rolling stock from other routes.

**Silver Star—Carolinas:** (see also Mar. News.) The major reroute, substituting Charlottesville and Charlotte for Richmond and Raleigh, might come next Jan. Or it might not. Claytor told the NARP Board, "It's going to depend on the CSX's ability to fix the connection north of Columbia. CSX wanted to make the change right away, they wanted to make it yesterday. We axed [doing it this spring] right away and then we [told CSX] we would try it for the fall but you'll have to have the connection done; they said they couldn't have the connection done by the fall; we said 'your problem'—we can't move it until you get the connection done."

[As of early June, it appeared that the Columbia connection is on hold because of funding problems: CSX expected full reimbursement from the City of Columbia but the city and CSX had no written agreement.]

Claytor said he favors the reroute and would rename the train "probably 'The Florida Special.'" In Mar. 31 House Appropriations testimony, Claytor—responding to questions from an angry Rep. W.G. (Bill) Hefner (D-NC)—called this reroute plus a connecting train for Raleigh "the best solution for the majority of the people involved."

The Raleigh connection, as described in Amtrak's Mar. 29 memo to affected legislators, would be partly funded by the State of North Carolina under Sec. 403(b) and would connect



## SEN. WEICKER ON PASSENGER TRAINS

**"In 1963, when I was first elected to the state legislature, we spent the next 2 years creating the [Connecticut Transportation Authority] because the New Haven Railroad went bankrupt. I'm not about ready to hear about the privatization of either the commuter lines or Amtrak . . . Private railroads in the 1960s paid all their capital to their stockholders and left the taxpayers holding the bag . . . We were within days of no commuter service and within weeks of no rail passenger service throughout the U.S. I think it's absolutely a miracle as much has been done [to revive train service] . . ."**



**"We are the only civilized, economically powerful nation in the world that puts such a small value on rail passenger service. The immediate problem is the result of the kind of economics practiced in this town—Republican and Democratic . . . Rail passenger service for conservation, energy, security, mobility—you name it—should be one of the priorities . . . I know the chairman [Frank Lautenberg] will do everything he can to see that these programs are not just funded, but are funded adequately. We're both up for reelection, and I think it's significant that our views on this have been consistent. If anyone tries to justify the administration's position, God help them!"**

—Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-CT), at Mar. 24 Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee hearing

in Greensboro to/from points south and run Greensboro-Raleigh. "If operationally feasible, Amtrak would prefer to have this train continue through . . . to Selma, NC, with connecting through coaches on the 'Palmetto' to/[from] Richmond/Washington/New York. If schedule constraints make this impossible, and the 403(b) train has to terminate at Raleigh, a dedicated bus between Raleigh and Selma would provide this same service between Raleigh and northeastern points via the 'Palmetto' at Selma."

Amtrak later decided a bus would run Raleigh-Selma because, as Claytor told the NARP Board, "it turns out not to be feasible to . . . have the cross-state train connect both the rerouted 'Star' and the 'Palmetto.' We have to have 5 hours to turn the train around in Miami. Northbound, we [must leave] Columbia by about 4:45 AM, because [Southern's] northbound freight fleet starts about then. If we get behind that we would have to trail a relatively slow freight train all the way to Charlotte which would kill our schedule."

Nevertheless, Claytor said the Greensboro-Raleigh train would "be a very inexpensive 403(b) train because the traffic is going to be good and the costs extremely low, much lower than the [1984-85 New York-Charlotte 'Carolinian'] . . ."

"We'd put a dedicated bus in from Winston-Salem to Greensboro. Now that's only 28 miles. That would give Winston-Salem direct service both to New York and to Florida.

"Southern Pines would have a bus connection to Fayetteville in both directions with the 'Palmetto.' Experience shows that about 95% of their rail business comes from the north, so that would be continued and . . . it would be just about the same as the running-time we have now" because "Silver Star"

runs so slowly on the unsignalled Raleigh-Selma line.

A "Star" reroute also would mean:

- less service at Richmond. "Star," for example, is the only northbound departure from Richmond between 9:55 AM (8:55 AM Sundays and holidays) and 4:50 PM.

- improved prospects for extending the New York-Savannah "Palmetto" to Jacksonville: "Palmetto" could then pick up "Star" traffic from Jacksonville-Richmond and other markets "Star" would no longer serve. Responding to NARP Pres. John R. Martin's Apr. 21 letter seeking restudy of the extension, Claytor wrote May 16 that, "once [the reroute] is accomplished, we will then take another look . . . probably with a schedule offering more acceptable Jacksonville times . . . The poor performance projection for the extension [as previously studied] is primarily due to . . . the marginal arrival/departure hours at Jacksonville (12:30 AM/4:10 AM)."

- per Amtrak's Mar. memo, "if station facilities are made available, a stop [on the rerouted NY-FL run] could also be made at Rock Hill, SC."

Claytor said he thought the new pattern would "be frankly, an improved service all around over what we've got now . . . looking at it as a whole for the whole states of North and South Carolina." In his Mar. 31 exchange with Rep. Hefner, Claytor responded to worries that Amtrak 'caved in' too easily to CSX's wishes: "My policy has been that [Amtrak and the freight railroads] have to work together to find a reasonable solution to each other's problems. If I don't do that, when the contract runs out, I'll be out of business because they'll never make another contract with me." Thus the importance of the "Cardinal" situation noted above, where there may not be a "reasonable solution."

**Silver Star—Florida:** On June 12, "Silver Star's" Miami section (Trains 91, 92) began taking a different, 11-mile longer route between Wildwood and Winter Haven, as CSX stopped using its 54-mile direct Coleman-Auburndale line. CSX has fully offset the approximately 20 minutes added here by reducing running times elsewhere (although the 5-7 minutes saved between Columbia-Raleigh would be lost with the Charlotte reroute). Some of the offset comes from track and signal improvements in Miami, Auburndale, and other places. Some of these improvements will also benefit "Silver Meteor"; the new Auburndale power switches mean a future Tampa-Miami train could get through Auburndale without

### WATCH THOSE TIGHT CONNECTIONS!

**In explaining why the same cross-state train could not connect at Greensboro with a rerouted Florida train and at Selma with "Palmetto," Amtrak Pres. Claytor referred the NARP Board to "an operating problem that is sometimes overlooked and, may I suggest that some of you all who give us wonderful suggestions—which we're delighted to have—overlook this point more often than any other: even if on paper we could work [it] out, it would be a close connection . . . [and] we would face the situation that we have in Salt Lake City that is inherently unsatisfactory: 2 very long-distance trains that tie to each other with a tight schedule so that if either one of them is a half hour late, the other one is a half hour late.**

**"If you did that to the southbound 'Star' at Greensboro and it gets [to and returns from] Florida a half hour late and gets back behind the freight [at Columbia—see story], you've just got a mess on your hands. Even if you can do it on paper, you don't want to have that kind of interconnecting schedule between two very long-distance trains."**



stopping—a big improvement over the 1982-85 “Silver Palm.”

The new “Vitis” route goes through Dade City and Lakeland—but not past the Lakeland station served by Amtrak’s Tampa trains, which is west of town. NARP has told Lakeland’s mayor that a city initiative to relocate its Amtrak station would give the city another train, and direct service to points south to Miami and to Wildwood, Ocala, and Waldo. This would also mean that Tampa-Miami service which now requires a 70-minute Tampa-Winter Haven feeder-bus ride could be accomplished with a much shorter 48-mile Tampa-Lakeland feeder bus.

NARP Dir. Charles A. Dunn wrote to Dade City Mayor Charles McIntosh offering to help get a stop there; the mayor wrote back, “we are definitely interested.” The May 28 *Tampa Tribune* reported this exchange under the headline, “Dade City campaign on track for passenger train service.” ■

### **MORE CARS!** (continued from page 1)

the major state transportation bond bill signed by Gov. Michael S. Dukakis (D) in early April.]

The Amtrak order is a “significant breakthrough” not only for Bombardier (see box) but also for Amtrak, whose operating subsidy the new cars will reduce, and for passengers on Amtrak’s unreserved trains, where standing-room-only conditions are no longer confined to weekends and holidays. Amtrak estimates the cars will generate \$12 mill. a year in added revenue and—after subtracting payments on the cars, for which Bombardier is assisting with financing—reduce the operating subsidy by about \$5 mill. a year.

The new cars may run on Chicago-based corridor trains and possibly on a 3rd “San Joaquin” if Caltrans agrees to fund such; Amfleet cars now in Chicago may be sent to the Northeast and Empire Corridors, which have the main standing-

### **MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH FOR EVERYONE**

**“This order constitutes a significant breakthrough for Bombardier with Amtrak, a very prestigious client with considerable future needs.”**

—Thomas C. Owen, Bombardier VP—  
Marketing & Sales (U.S.A.)

room problems. (In a May letter to Caltrans, Claytor suggested Caltrans buy some cars of its own as an add-on to this order.) The increase in fleet size will also accommodate greater equipment demands after the Atlantic City line opens next spring, and permit improved maintenance schedules and thus better service reliability generally.

Look for longer Northeast Corridor (NEC) trains and more express Metroliners. Claytor told the House Appropriations Subcomm. on Transportation Mar. 31 that he’d like “4 [Metroliner] nonstops right away [instead of today’s single northbound run] but we don’t have the equipment. We are foregoing revenue [as a result].” Federal Railroad Administrator John H. Riley agreed: “Equipment limitations have limited NEC traffic growth . . . Amtrak loses revenue because it doesn’t have enough equipment to serve.” Riley has also said Amtrak “is throwing away money” for lack of cars.

Claytor said at the Press Club that Amtrak saw enormous opportunities ahead for improvement and expansion and added that “the principal problem we see ahead is capacity.”

[Amtrak also badly needs new cars to reduce operating subsidies on the eastern long-distance trains where many existing cars are almost 40 years old; new cars here must await complete testing of the 3 Viewliner prototypes and a larger increase in Amtrak’s “purchasing power” through a capital appropriation and/or financing package. If corridors around

Chicago, Seattle-Portland, and elsewhere, ever get 90+ mph track, a “Bombardier-style” financing package to increase capacity on such corridors should be possible. Amtrak also would love to add a sleeping car to every western long-distance train, but this would require a capital appropriation.]

Amtrak says its new cars “will be fully compatible with Amtrak’s equipment; there will be a significant degree of commonality of systems with existing Amfleet coaches, thus maximizing Amtrak’s maintenance and parts efficiency.”

Salci said the car “is a Pullman model which also incorporates Budd technology to conform with existing Amtrak equipment. [Bombardier] owns all rights to the Pullman and Budd passenger rail car technologies, following its 1986 acquisition of Pullman Technology Inc. and its 1987 acquisition of the assets of Transit America, former owner of the Budd designs.” Salci previously served as president of Transit America.

Claytor said the cars, like other Amtrak cars, will have “folding steps, newly designed and improved luggage racks, improved seating, and modern sound proofing and climate control systems.” The cars will use high-speed trucks with outboard bearings. ■

### **TRAVELER’S ADVISORY** (continued from page 1)

**Amtrak restored Florence-Myrtle Beach feeder bus May 15, which meets New York-Savannah “Palmetto.”**

**Toronto-Chicago “International” passengers be advised: due to Grand Trunk Western Rr. track work, westbound Train 365 will detour Mon.-Fri. via Pontiac, MI, May 1-July 22, missing Flint, Lapeer, and adding 1:40 to schedule. Bus will serve missed stations.**

**Palatka, FL, Amtrak station was rededicated Mar. 30, following completion of \$300,000 facelift—part of a larger \$800,000 project to build an adjacent community center, and to convert part of station into a community center annex. Funding from U.S., State of Florida, Amtrak.**

**Davis, CA, Amtrak station was rededicated June 4, with a \$1.5 million improvement project nearly completed. Multimodal project, funded by State of California and City of Davis, encompassed restoration of 1913 Mediterranean train station, construction of adjacent bus/taxi station, plus parking/grounds improvements.**

**DeLand, FL, Amtrak station was rededicated and reopened June 6, following completion of unique renovation project, funded mostly by local contributions of volunteer labor, donated materials. Amtrak also contributed. Volunteers included vocational school students, county prisoners, general contractor employees. Project’s value exceeds \$100,000. Amtrak had been using a trailer since station was closed by a Dec. 1981 fire. NARP, Florida Coalition of Rr. Passengers, DeLand Chamber of Commerce worked for years to reopen this station, built in 1918.**

**Charleston, WV, has had a new \$200,000 Amtrak station facility since late 1987, funded by CSX Rr. and located in east wing (ex-baggage room) of main station. Amtrak dedicated it June 10. Main station (Amtrak’s previous site) has been sold for retail development.**